The Country's Forests

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
FOREST SERVICE.

THE COUNTRY'S FORESTS.

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THE COUNTRY'S FORESTS.

THE NATIONAL FORESTS.

WHERE THEY ARE.

There are 163 National Forests, mostly situated in the mountains of the West. Others are in Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, Arkansas, Florida, Alaska, and Porto Rico.

Their total area is over 186,000,000 acres, which is as much as all the New England States and New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia combined. The average size of a National Forest is 1,150,000 acres, or about 1,800 square miles.

The Government is now buying land in the Southern Appalachian and White Mountains for National Forests in the East.

WHAT THEY ARE FOR.

National Forests are set apart to insure a perpetual supply of timber for the use and necessities of the people of the United States, and to prevent destruction of the forest cover which regulates the flow of streams.

WHAT THEY CONTAIN.

All told, the National Forests contain approximately 600 billion feet of merchantable timber, worth at least $900,000,000. The other resources are worth probably $1,100,000,000 more, bringing their total value up to something like $2,000,000,000.

They also contain 1,175 watersheds which supply cities and towns, and 324 water-power and 1,266 irrigation projects developed or in course of development.

HOW THEY ARE ADMINISTERED.

The Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture administers the National Forests:

It protects them from fire and other destructive agencies.

It builds roads, trails, telephone lines, bridges, and other works to make them accessible.

It conducts the sale and oversees the cutting of mature timber, in accordance with the principles of forestry.

It regulates the grazing of live stock in a way to improve the range and protect the settler and home builder from unfair competition in its use.

It issues permits for the development of water power and for the construction of hotels,

dwellings, stores, factories, telephone lines, conduits, public roads, reservoirs, power transmission lines, and the like.

The resources of the National Forests are not locked up. The timber, water, and pasture are for the use of the people, and the minerals are open to development just as on unreserved public land.

HOW THEY WERE USED IN 1913.

Over 495,000,000 feet of National Forest timber, worth more than $1,075,000, was cut under sale by different purchasers. Contracts were closed with 6,000 individual purchasers for the sale of more than 2 billion feet of timber, worth nearly $4,500,000, to be removed during a period of years.

Over 121 million feet of timber, worth $192-000, were given away to 38,000 settlers, miners, and others to develop their farms and claims.

More than 1,550,000 cattle, horses, and swine and 7,860,000 sheep and goats were grazed on the Forest ranges by 27,000 stockmen.

Seventy-six power plants, 800 hotels, rest houses, and summer resorts, and 1,400 stores and other business buildings were operating on the Forests under permit.

One thousand seven hundred new mining claims were patented within the Forests,

where the total mining population was more than 24,000.

Twenty thousand permanent settlers occupied farms within the Forest boundaries.

One and one-half million campers, hunters, fishermen, and other pleasure seekers used the Forests as recreation grounds.

Anyone desiring information concerning the sale of National Forest timber should write to the Forester, Washington, D. C., or to the district forester at any of the following places: Missoula, Mont.; Denver, Colo.; Albuquerque, N. Mex.; Ogden, Utah; San Francisco, Cal.; or Portland, Oreg.

HOW THEY WERE PROTECTED AND IMPROVED IN 1913.

Forest officers extinguished 2,472 fires during the year.

Fifty per cent of these had burned over less than one-quarter of an acre before they were put out.

Forest officers killed 4,686 predatory animals, including mountain lions, coyotes, and wolves, in order to protect stock grazed on the Forests.

More than 350 miles of road, 275 miles of fire line, 3,800 miles of telephone line, and 2,600 miles of trail were built.

Almost 30,000 acres were sown or planted to young trees.

More than 2,000 miles of road, 773 miles of fire line, 15,000 miles of telephone line, and 16,000 miles of trail have been built, and 87,000 acres planted or sown on the National Forests since they were transferred to the administration of the Department of Agriculture in 1905.

WHAT THEY BRING TO THE STATES.

Twenty-five per cent of all receipts from National Forests go to the counties in which they lie, to be used for schools and roads.

In 1913 this amounted to $586,593.39.

An additional 10 per cent is expended by the Secretary of Agriculture upon roads and trails constructed primarily for the benefit of settlers within the Forests. In 1913 more than $234,000 was available for the purpose.

FOREST FIRES.

THE LOSS.

Forest fires in the United States have destroyed on an average each year at least $25,000,000 worth of timber, and have caused a loss in stock, crops, buildings, and other improvements of many millions more.

In the past 50 years more than 3,000 persons have been burned to death in forest fires.

The Peshtigo, Wis., fire in 1871 burned over 1,280,000 acres and cost 1,500 human lives. The Hinckley, Minn., fire in 1894 burned over 160,000 acres, with a death list of 418. The great Idaho, Montana, and Minnesota fires of 1910 swept 2,300,000 acres and burned to death 127 persons.

Every fire in the forest, no matter how small, may develop into a serious conflagration. All that is needed is a strong wind and material to feed upon.

In the State of Michigan alone, forest fires during the 10 years between 1901 and 1911 caused a loss of $20,000,000.

In Massachusetts forest fires in the last three years have caused a damage of over $823,000.

Forest fires are unnecessary, are nearly always the result of carelessness, and may wipe out in an hour what nature has taken hundreds of years to create.

They destroy existing forests.

They destroy the possibility of future forests.

They destroy a great market for labor.

They destroy the beauty of a region.

They destroy homes.

They destroy lives.

They destroy prosperity.

THE CAUSES.

The three chief causes of forest fires are railroads, campers, and lightning.

Among them they are responsible for more than half the fires that start.

Sparks from the smokestack and live coals from the fire box are responsible for the fires which start along railroad rights of way.

Hunters, pleasure seekers, and others leave camp fires burning, or throw lighted matches or tobacco into inflammable material in the forest. A disastrous fire may result from such practices.

All fires start as small fires.

THE REMEDY.

Forest fires can be prevented by:

Never leaving a camp fire until it is out.

Never making a camp fire in leaves, rotten wood, or against a log.

Never tossing away burning matches or tobacco.

Never burning brush, grass, or slashings during a dry season.

WHAT IS BEING DONE.

The Federal Government, 20 of the States, and 30 timber owners' associations maintain a system of patrol and take other preventive

measures on their lands during danger seasons of the year.

The area thus protected by the Government approximates 165,000,000 acres; that protected by the States (largely in cooperation with the Government as provided by section 2 of the Weeks law) 100,000,000 acres; and that protected by the timber owners' associations, 25,000,000 acres.

As a result of such protection the loss on the National Forests in 1912 was kept down to $75,000, and on State and private lands to less than $200,000.

Had these lands not been protected the loss, based on the average annual fire loss in the whole country, would have been many times this figure.

Under section 2 of the Weeks law, the Forest Service is cooperating with 17 States in protecting from fire the forest cover on the watersheds of navigable streams.

FORESTRY IN THE STATES.

Twenty-five States have active forest departments, the majority of which employ professional foresters.

Twenty have efficient fire-protective systems.

Fourteen have established State forests, with an aggregate area of more than 3,400,000 acres.

Ten maintain forest-tree nurseries which produce each year nearly 10,000,000 small trees, about half of which are distributed to private owners at cost.

Pennsylvania has 983,529 acres of State forests, has planted to date 2,800 acres with young trees, produces 2,500,000 forest tree seedlings from its nurseries every year, has a number of State forest experiment stations, and makes an annual appropriation for forestry of about $328,000.

New York has 1,664,000 acres of State forests, has planted to date 7,000 acres, produces 4,500,000 young trees yearly, has established a State forest experiment station, and makes an annual appropriation for forestry of about $164,000.

Massachusetts has 15,000 acres of State forests and 56 separate municipal forests. Each year it produces from its nurseries upward of 1,300,000 young trees. The annual appropriation for forestry amounts to about $55,000.

Minnesota has 43,000 acres of State forests, and makes an annual appropriation for forestry of about $233,000. Citizens of the State

have planted 250,000 acres of their lands with trees.

Wisconsin has 400,000 acres of State forests, and makes an annual appropriation of $95,000 for forestry.

STATE FOREST ORGANIZATIONS.

Those who wish further information concerning forestry in any particular State should write to the proper official listed on pages 13 and 14.

State forest organizations and officials.

State.	Officer in charge.	Address.
Alabama	Secretary, commission of forestry	Montgomery.
California	State forester	Sacramento.
Colorado	do	Fort Collins.
Connecticut	Forester of agricultural experiment station	New Haven.
Hawaii	Superintendent of forestry	Honolulu.
Idaho	State land commissioner	Boise.
Indiana	Secretary, State board of forestry	Indianapolis.
Iowa	State forestry commissioner	Des Moines.
Kansas	State forester	Manhattan.
Kentucky	do	Frankfort.
Louisiana	President, State conservation commission	New Orleans.
Maine	State forest commissioner	Augusta.
Maryland	State forester	Baltimore.
Massachusetts	do	Boston.
Michigan	do	Lansing.
Minnesota	do	St. Paul.
Montana	do	Helena.
New Hampshire	do	Concord.
New Jersey	Forester, forest park reservation commission	Trenton.
New York	Superintendent, State forests	Albany.
North Carolina	Forester of State geological and economic survey	Chapel Hill.
North Dakota	State forester	Bottineau.

State forest organizations and officials—Continued.

State.	Officer in charge.	Address.
Ohio	Forester of agricultural experiment station	Wooster.
Oregon	State forester	Salem.
Pennsylvania	Commissioner of forestry	Harrisburg.
Rhode Island	do	Chepachet.
South Dakota	State forester	Custer.
Tennessee	Commissioner of game, fish, and forestry	Nashville.
Vermont	State forester	Burlington.
Virginia	Commissioner of agriculture	Richmond.
Washington	State forester and game warden	Olympia.
West Virginia	Forest, game, and fish warden	Belington.
Wisconsin	State forester	Madison.